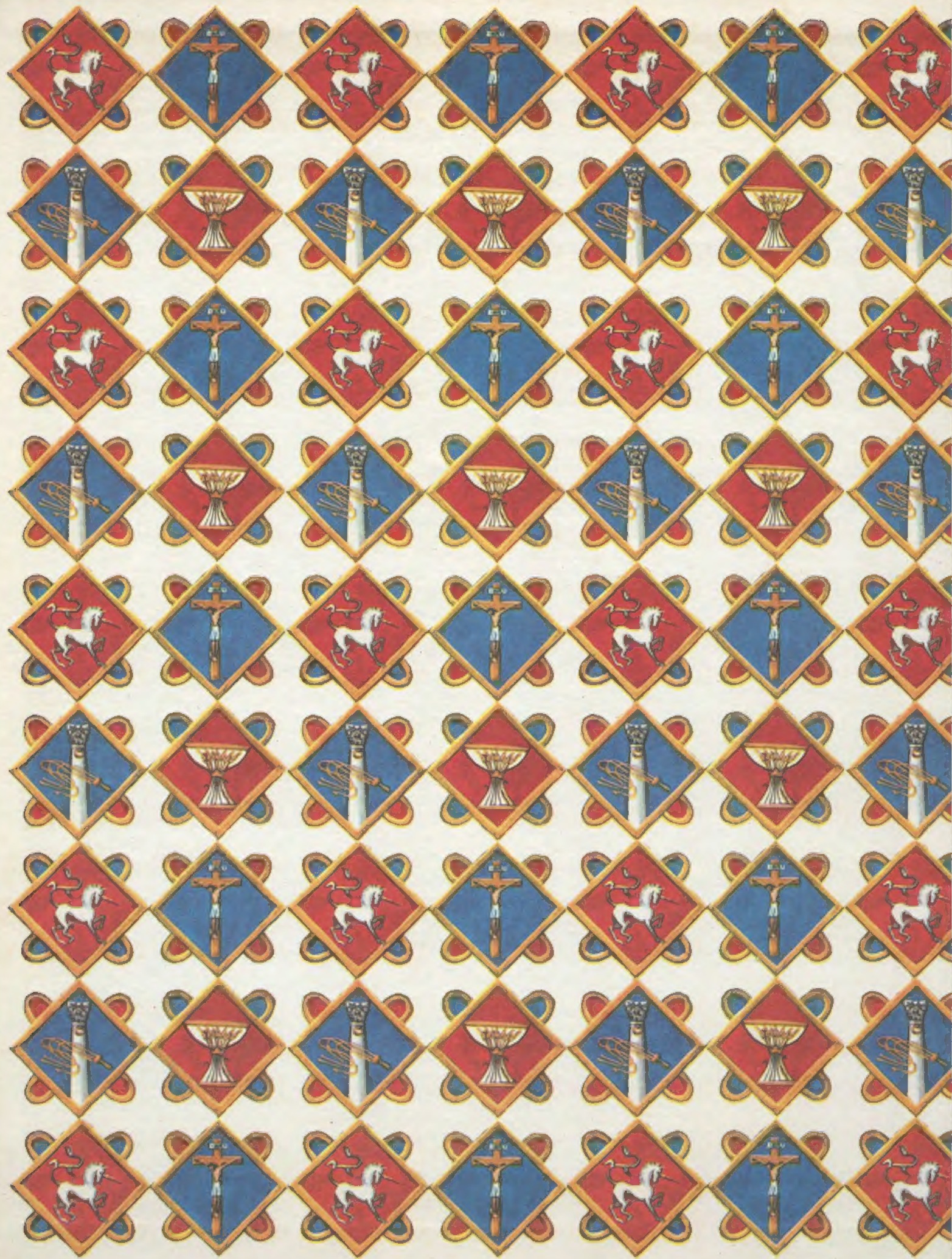


A CATHOLIC CHILD'S BOOK ABOUT

# THE MASS









A Catholic Child's Book About

# THE MASS

by  
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# THE MEANING OF THE MASS



*One of the best ways to show our love for God is by going to Mass. You should know why this is true.*

*We know that Adam refused to love and obey God. No one but God could make up for that disobedience. Therefore, Jesus, who is God, became man to suffer for the sins of all men.*

*We know that Jesus, as true man, could die only once. His obedience in dying for us was so precious that Jesus wanted to show it over and over again. And also, Jesus wanted us to be united with Him in offering His sacrifice to God.*

*How could Jesus do this? A person dies when body and blood are separated. This happened to Jesus on the cross. But at the Last Supper He showed His death by the separate consecration of bread and wine into His body and blood. And that was the first Mass.*

*Jesus told the apostles to keep on doing what He had done. He made them not only priests but bishops, and gave them power to make other men priests so we could always have the Mass.*



We come to Mass  
to give ourselves to God



THE PRIEST GOES TO THE ALTAR

Jesus told a story about two men who came to church. The first man was proud; he stood up and said:

"O God, I thank You that I am not a sinner like the rest of men. I fast and give a tenth of my property to the poor."

The other man was very humble. He did not even raise his eyes to heaven; he bowed his head and prayed:

"O God, be merciful to me a sinner."

God was pleased with this man; like him we humble ourselves before God.

WE BEGIN THE MASS BY SAYING:

*"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."*



We tell God  
that we are sorry

First the priest humbles himself at the foot of the altar. He tells God that he is sorry for his sins; and then we all join in to say how sorry we are.



The word *altar* means a *high place*. God wants us to look up because Jesus on the altar is doing over again what He did on the cross.



The priest kisses the altar because it is a holy place. In the early days, Mass was offered on the tombs of martyrs. To remind us of this, the altar contains relics of those who shed their blood out of love for Jesus.



We now join the  
priest in praising God



The INTROIT—it means  
entering God's House.

The first Christians gathered  
together and marched in groups  
to the place where Mass would be  
offered. As they walked along  
they would praise God by singing.

The priest is now reading a few  
words of one of those songs. At  
high Mass, the words are sung by  
the choir.



We call on God  
to have mercy on us

#### KYRIE ELEISON

The priest starts off by saying:  
Lord, have mercy on us. We an-  
swer in the same words and he  
repeats them.

Then we say: Christ, have mer-  
cy on us, and the priest echoes  
our words and again we repeat  
them.

Finally, the priest says: Lord,  
have mercy on us, and we echo  
his words; and then the priest says  
them once more.





We join the angels  
in giving glory to God



Two thousand years ago God sent angels to sing a birthday song in honor of His Son. The angels sang: "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to men of good will." The Church has added more beautiful words to that song in praise and honor of God for His goodness to us.



Priest and people  
speak to each other

At different times during the Mass, the priest turns to us and says: "The Lord be with you." And we answer: "And with your spirit."

After the GLORIA, the priest speaks to us in Latin: *Dominus vobiscum*. Because the words are so easy, we can answer in Latin: *Et cum spiritu tuo*.



We offer a prayer  
which collects the hopes of all



ALL THE PEOPLE NOW PRAY WITH THE PRIEST

The priest raises his arms to show he is gathering up the prayers of everybody. We raise our hearts to God as we read the prayer in our missal. It is different in each Mass. Here are some examples; notice how the words apply to everyone.

“O God from whom all good things come, grant we beseech You, that by Your inspiration we may think right thoughts and put them into practice.”

“We beseech Your heavenly goodness, Lord, to further the desires of Your people, so they may see their duty and find strength to accomplish it.”

“Grant, we beseech You, almighty God, that with our thoughts ever fixed on spiritual things, we may accomplish Your pleasure both in word and deed.”

This is also a good time to ask some special favors from God.





## We listen as God speaks to us in the Epistle



THE PRIEST NOW READS A LETTER FROM GOD

The Epistles are generally a few paragraphs taken from the letters of the apostles. St. Paul, for example, wrote to his converts at Philippi. We listen to some words of this letter on the Sunday before Easter:

“Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who though He was by nature God, did not consider being equal to

God a thing to be clung to, but emptied Himself, taking the nature of a slave and being made like unto men. And appearing in the form of man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient to death, even to death on a cross.”

The more we think over these words, the more we realize how Jesus loves us.



We hear the words Jesus spoke  
when He was on earth



THE GOSPEL IS GOOD NEWS FROM JESUS

The missal is open at the feast of St. Matthias. He was chosen as an apostle to take the place of Judas who betrayed our Lord. The priest is wearing red vestments because St. Matthias was a martyr and gave up his life out of love for Christ.

Here are the closing words of the Gospel which we read on this apostle's feast:

"Come to Me, all you who labor and are

burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden light."

Sermons instruct us on how we should live. Hearing about what we ought to do is important, but Mass and the sacraments help us to do God's holy will.





We tell God we believe everything He teaches us

We honor and adore God by taking His word for everything He tells us.

In the beginning God revealed His truth through Moses and the prophets. Then He spoke directly through His Son. Today He speaks through His Church.

The CREED contains the truths that every Christian must believe about God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

As the priest genuflects we say: "And He [Christ] was made man." We think of God's love in stooping so low to share our human nature.



Our gifts are a sign that we give ourselves

The gifts we offer stand for all the things we have received from God. To show this, the early Christians brought gifts for the Church: food for the poor, candles for the altar, bread and wine for the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice.

We dare not come with empty hands if we are to join Christ in offering His life. We must also offer our lives to God—all that we have and all that we are.



We offer bread,  
our staff of life, to God



THE PRIEST SPEAKS TO GOD FOR ALL OF US

Everyone present now places himself in spirit on the paten—the golden plate. The host we offer is made of many grains of wheat—just as we who are many are *one* in Christ. We raise our hearts to God and pray with the priest who says:

“Accept, O holy Father, almighty and eternal God, this host for the all-holy Sacrifice, which I Your unworthy servant offer

unto You, my living and true God, to atone for my numberless sins of willfulness and neglect; on behalf of all here present, and likewise for all faithful Christians, living and dead, that it may profit me and them as a means of salvation until life everlasting. Amen.”

Even when we are dead the Church prays for us in every Mass that is offered.





The Offertory of the Mass was once a great procession  
in which all the faithful came forward to offer their gifts  
and their lives to God. Not only bread and wine for the Sacrifice  
were given, but wax and oil for the Church's lamps,  
and food and clothing for her poor.

Only later did our present custom of offering money begin.

But our Offertory still has exactly the same meaning  
as that of long ago—we who offer our gifts to God  
give ourselves to Him and in that way we become His holy people.



Wine is poured—  
for the Mass is a banquet



JESUS USED WINE FROM GRAPES AT THE LAST SUPPER

The priest pours wine into the chalice for our gift. It took many grapes to make the wine, and many hearts are needed to make a pleasing gift to God. All who are baptized belong to Jesus and He wants them to join Him at Mass.

People used to bring bread and wine to the altar to show that they gave *themselves* to God. We need food and drink to stay alive; offering them now shows that we

are ready to give our life up to God.

Today, when we give money, we say: "Take this—and me, too."

To remind us that we are united with Christ, the priest now adds a few drops of water to the wine. Here is part of the beautiful prayer we say: "... grant that by the mystery of this water and wine we may share His divine nature, who shared this human nature of ours."





Offering the chalice shows that we give our lives to God

In the chalice we have placed all we have and all we are. Now we pray:

“We offer to You, O Lord, this chalice, that it may obtain salvation for us. We beg Your gracious kindness to let our offering come before Your divine majesty as the sweet scent of incense for our salvation, and that of all the world. Amen.”

We all belong to the great family of Jesus Christ. On the cross, Christ’s arms are stretched out to embrace all men. Our love for all men must be like that if God is to be pleased with our gift.



Jesus gave us a perfect example of how we should live for God and give ourselves to Him. On the night before He died, Jesus prayed: “Father, if You are willing, remove this cup [of suffering] from Me; yet not My will but Yours be done.”



We call upon the Holy Spirit  
to bless our gift



THE PRIEST RINSES HIS FINGERS

In the name of us all, the priest has prayed that God will accept us with our gifts: "In a spirit of humility and with a contrite heart, we beg You to accept us, and may our sacrifice be so offered in Your sight this day as to please You, O Lord God.

"Come, Sanctifying Spirit, almighty and everlasting God, and bless this sacrifice we have prepared for the glory of Your holy name. Amen."

Long ago the priest handled the different

gifts which people brought to the altar. Then it was necessary to wash his hands. During that time the people sang Psalm 25. Now the priest reads it alone.

After that he prays: "Receive, O most holy Trinity, this offering, which we make to You in remembrance of the Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . ."

After this the priest faces the people and gives them an important reminder.



The priest and the people  
pray for one another



WE ALL ASK GOD TO RECEIVE OUR GIFT

The priest is not acting for himself. He offers the Mass in the name of God for all who belong to Christ.

A priest is a man ordained by God to stand between God and the people. Therefore what the priest does at the altar he does for us. To remind us of this he says:

"Pray brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may become acceptable to God the Father almighty."

And we answer: "May the Lord accept

the sacrifice at your hands unto the praise and glory of His name, for *our* advantage, and that of all His holy Church."

Then the priest says, "Amen," which means "May it be so." We have prayed for one another and now we join our hearts and minds to offer this sacrifice to God.

The Mass is not just something being done for us; it is being done by the priest and by us in union with Christ. This means that we also have a part to play.



A final prayer begs God  
to bless our gifts



THE PRIEST READS THE SECRET

Our gifts, as well as ourselves, have now been set apart for God alone. This means we cannot take them back. The Latin word for “set apart” is *secreta*. This is the key to the meaning of the *Secret* prayer which changes from day to day.

Here is the SECRET for the feast of the Sacred Heart:

“Look, O God, upon the unspeakable love in the heart of Your dear Son, and accept our offering as a pleasing gift in atonement for our sins.”

The priest now says: *Per omnia saecula saeculorum*, which means, “forever and ever.” And we answer, “Amen.” A short dialogue follows to introduce the PREFACE.

The Lord be with you. *And with your spirit.*

Lift up your hearts. *We have lifted them up to the Lord.*

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. *This is right and proper.*

The words of the Preface change according to the feast we are celebrating.



We tell God how right it is  
to thank Him through Jesus



WE KNEEL DOWN AT THE SANCTUS

Here is the Preface for Sundays: "It is fitting indeed and proper, right and helpful for our salvation that we should always and everywhere give thanks to You, holy Lord, Father almighty, everlasting God, through Christ our Lord. For it is through Him that the angels praise Your majesty, the dominions adore, the powers are in awe, the vir-

tues of the highest heaven and blessed seraphim unite in blissful exultation. With them, we pray You, grant that our voices may be joined in adoring praise as we cry: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God almighty! Heaven and earth are filled with Your glory. Hail to You in the highest! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord."

The server now rings the bell three times to remind us to pay close attention.  
A good server knows how to put devotion into the sound of the Sanctus bell.



We beg God to protect  
the Church all over the world



WE BEGIN THE HOLIEST PART OF THE MASS

This is the most sacred part of the Mass; it is called the **CANON** from a Greek word meaning *always the same*. The priest prays this part of the Mass quietly.

Here are some of the words he is speaking to God: "Remember, Lord, Your servants . . . and all those gathered here around this altar . . . For them do we offer, and they themselves offer this sacrifice of praise to You . . . They bring their gifts for the salvation of their souls, and also for the health

and well-being they seek for themselves, their families and friends."

We pause to remember certain living people. After that the prayer continues:

"We unite ourselves with the glorious Mary ever Virgin, Mother of Jesus Christ . . . the holy apostles Peter and Paul . . . and all Your saints. Because of their merits and prayers, grant that we may always be defended by Your protection, through Christ our Lord. Amen."



Jesus, the innocent victim,  
takes on the burden of our sins



WE ASK JESUS TO BE OUR SACRIFICE

We think now of the love of Jesus who willingly offered His life on the cross to atone for our sins.

In the Old Testament people offered the fruits of their fields and the best of their flocks to God. Their priest would touch the sacrifice and ask God to let the gifts they offered stand for themselves.

Their priest would pray: "We deserve death for our sins; but let this victim take our place."

So our priest puts his hands over our offering and prays: "We beg You, O Lord, to receive in atonement this sacrifice of adoration from us and all Your household. Let our days be spent in Your peace, save us from damnation, and cause us to be numbered among Your flock, through Christ our Lord. Amen."

The server rings the bell to get us to pay close attention to what is taking place before us on the altar.



The Church prays  
for the miracle of the Mass



THE PRIEST MAKES SIGNS OF THE CROSS OVER OUR GIFTS

Now the priest offers the last prayer before the **CONSECRATION**. While making signs of the cross over the bread and wine, he asks God once more to be pleased with our offering: "O God, we beg of You to give Your full blessing to this gift; to consecrate

it and approve it. Make it perfect and pleasing to You, so that it may become for us the body and blood of Your dearly beloved Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

The Church is now going to do over again what our Lord told the apostles to do.

In the Old Testament the promise was made that the Church would have a pleasing sacrifice. God said: "From the rising of the sun even to the going down, My name is great among the Gentiles,  
and in every place there is sacrifice,  
and there is offered to My name a clean oblation."



The bread we offered  
becomes the living Jesus



JESUS USES THE PRIEST TO SAY: THIS IS MY BODY. .

On the day before our Lord suffered, He took bread into His holy and venerable hands and raised His eyes to heaven, giving thanks to His Father. Then He blessed the bread, and broke it and gave to His disciples, saying: Take and eat this, all of you, for . . .

THIS IS MY BODY

At the moment these words are spoken, Christ is truly present on the altar. This means that what before was bread, is now no longer bread; it is the living body of our Lord. What we see with our eyes has the outward appearance of bread, but it is really Jesus because He said so.

As soon as he has spoken the words of consecration, the priest bends his knee to adore Jesus, and the server tinkles the bell.



We bow our heads  
and adore Jesus



MY LORD AND MY GOD

The priest raises the host so we can adore Jesus who is now really and truly here under the appearance of bread.

The bread we offered stood for ourselves. Now our gift has been changed into Jesus.

The love He had for us in dying on the cross is being made present again in the Mass. "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, and the Son so loved us that He gave Himself for our salvation."

Jesus called Himself the Light of the world. While the sun is rising at different times all over the world, hundreds of priests are offering the holy sacrifice of the Mass. Catholics by the thousands are always adoring Jesus as He is lifted up.



The wine we offered becomes  
the precious blood of Christ



AGAIN JESUS SPEAKS THROUGH THE PRIEST AND SAYS: THIS IS MY BLOOD.

Jesus made it clear at the Last Supper that He was giving His Church a new sacrifice. Follow Christ now as the priest says: And again, after the supper, He took this excel-

lent chalice into His holy and venerable hands, and giving thanks to You, He blessed and gave it to His disciples, as He said: Take and drink of this, all of you:

FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD, OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL TESTAMENT:  
THE MYSTERY OF FAITH:

WHICH SHALL BE SHED FOR YOU AND FOR MANY UNTO THE REMISSION OF SINS.  
WHENEVER YOU SHALL DO THESE THINGS, YOU SHALL DO THEM IN MEMORY OF ME.



We think of Jesus shedding  
His precious blood for us



WE ADORE THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF JESUS

Jesus cannot ever die again, and yet with God things are different than with us. With God, time stood still on Good Friday, and the love of Jesus on the cross is made present in the Mass. It was our Lord Himself

who said: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to Myself." We adore the precious blood when the chalice is raised. We thank Jesus as we remember how He offers Himself out of love for us.

It took courage to stand under the cross when Jesus shed His blood for the sins of the world. We need courage today to take part in the Mass.

Sometimes people are afraid to speak up and praise God  
when the Church wants them to do that.



Jesus, the Lamb of God,  
is our sacrifice on the altar



JESUS BECOMES OUR GIFT TO GOD

We know that our gift is now pleasing to God. United with the priest we pray:

"Keeping in mind, therefore, the blessed Passion of Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, and likewise His Resurrection from the grave, as well as His glorious Ascension into heaven, we, Your servants, Lord, and with us all Your holy people offer to Your sovereign majesty from Your own gifts bestowed on us, a pure victim, a holy victim, a sinless victim; we offer You the holy bread that brings us life with You forever, and the chalice that

wins us unending joy." The priest continues: "Look down upon these gifts with pleasure and love, and be pleased to accept them, as You gladly took the gifts that Abel brought, the sacrifice our father Abraham once made, and that which Your high priest Melchisedech offered to You."

"May all of us who take part in this reception of the most sacred body and blood of Your Son at the altar, be filled with every heavenly blessing and grace; through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen."



We keep in mind  
the entire family of Christ



We pray for the Poor Souls:

"Remember, also, Lord, your servants, men and women, who have left this world before us, professing their faith, and who rest in the sleep of peace. Give to them and to all who rest in Christ a home of rest and peace; through the same Christ, our Lord, Amen."

We now beg God to be merciful  
*to us sinners.*

We also call the saints to join us in praying for mercy, and end our prayers by begging God to admit us into heaven with them.



While making signs of the cross with the sacred host over the chalice, the priest prays:

"Through Him, and with Him, and in Him, is paid to You, O almighty Father, in union with the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory. For ever and ever." We answer "Amen" to show that we too have taken part in offering God the body and blood of His beloved Son.

In the Mass we come to God through Christ. In no other way can we give to God the honor and glory He deserves from us.





We pay all honor and glory  
to God through Jesus



THE LITTLE ELEVATION

The priest raises the host and the chalice together. This is a sign that all present are in union with our Lord. With Jesus we have given ourselves entirely to God.

Offering the Mass is the holy work of the entire congregation. Each of us has certain things to do and certain things to say. When we do them together at the right time we give great honor and glory to God.

When we said "Amen" we meant "Yes, it is true, we do want to be one with our Lord and with one another."

Our "Amen" also means that we join with the priest in thanking God the Father for the gift of the body and blood of Jesus.

The Mass is the great prayer of God's family the Church. Jesus is the head, and all of us who are baptized are members of His mystical body. In the Mass we are united with Jesus in the love He has for God and for all who belong to Him. It is this holy love for one another that pleases God our Father. When we say this great "Amen" it means that the sacrifice is complete.



We talk to God in the words  
Jesus told us to say



WE SAY THE PRAYER WHICH JESUS TAUGHT US

We prepare now to receive from God His gift to us. We pray the "Our Father."

Think what that prayer means: Our Father, how little we have praised Your name; how poorly do we let Your kingdom grow in our hearts; how slowly we do Your holy will; how many of Your children starve because we are greedy; how slow we are to

forgive those who offend us. Dear Father, how little we do to deserve all Your love.

"Deliver us from all evils, past, present, or to come, and in Your great mercy grant us peace in our lifetime, through the intercession of blessed and glorious ever Virgin Mary, Mother of God, of Peter and Paul and Andrew, and of all Your saints . . ."



We get ready to share  
the bread of heaven



THE HOST IS BROKEN

The priest now breaks the sacred host. In the days of our Lord it was the custom for the head of a family to break the bread into smaller pieces. This was a sign of love and fellowship with those at the table. Jesus did this at the Last Supper.

The first Christians called the Mass the "breaking of the bread."

The priest breaks the host to remind the friends of Christ that they are now invited to share the bread of heaven on the altar. After breaking the host, the priest says: "The peace of the Lord be with you always." And then the people assure him of their loyalty to Christ and to one another by answering: "And with your spirit."



Jesus is  
the bread of life



A PART OF THE HOST IS PUT IN THE CHALICE

And now the priest breaks off a smaller piece which he drops into the chalice, saying: "May this mingling and hallowing of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ help us who receive it unto life everlasting. Amen."

The separation of our Lord's blood from His body caused His death. The separate

consecration makes His Sacrifice present again in the Mass. When Jesus arose from the dead His body and blood were reunited. What we receive in Holy Communion is the Risen Christ; and this is the best hope we have for our resurrection from the dead.

Jesus said, "If anyone eat of this bread he shall live forever."



## Jesus is the Lamb of God



THE AGNUS DEI (LAMB OF GOD)

Once a year, in remembrance of God's mercy, Moses commanded that each Old Testament family offer a lamb as a sacrifice.

To remember that Jesus is the Lamb of our New Testament sacrifice, we now repeat the words of St. John the Baptist: "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world!" We now say those words

three times, adding: "Have mercy on us," twice; and finally, "Give us peace."

The Mass makes us all brothers and sisters of our Lord. His death on the cross has restored all men to peace with God, and we must be at peace with one another. Jesus is the Host at the banquet and He wants His guests to know the true meaning of love.

Our prayers are now  
addressed to Jesus



PRAYERS BEFORE HOLY COMMUNION

In a certain way we come to Mass to exchange gifts with God. We have given ourselves to Him and now we are invited to receive Jesus in Holy Communion.

To prepare our hearts for this Gift of God, the Church now offers three beautiful prayers. We can read them in our missal.

We call upon our Lord to give us the right kind of thoughts. We ask Him to give peace to His Church and to all of us who are

united with Him. We beg him never to allow anything to separate us from Him.

And finally we ask Jesus to be the healing remedy against sin—both now and in the future.

A person who has enough food stays in good bodily health. The best way to remain in good spiritual health is to receive our Lord often in Holy Communion. Jesus said: "He that eats Me shall live by Me."





We speak the words  
of the centurion



"LORD, I AM NOT WORTHY"

The priest takes up the host and says:  
"I will take the bread of heaven, and I will  
call upon the name of the Lord."

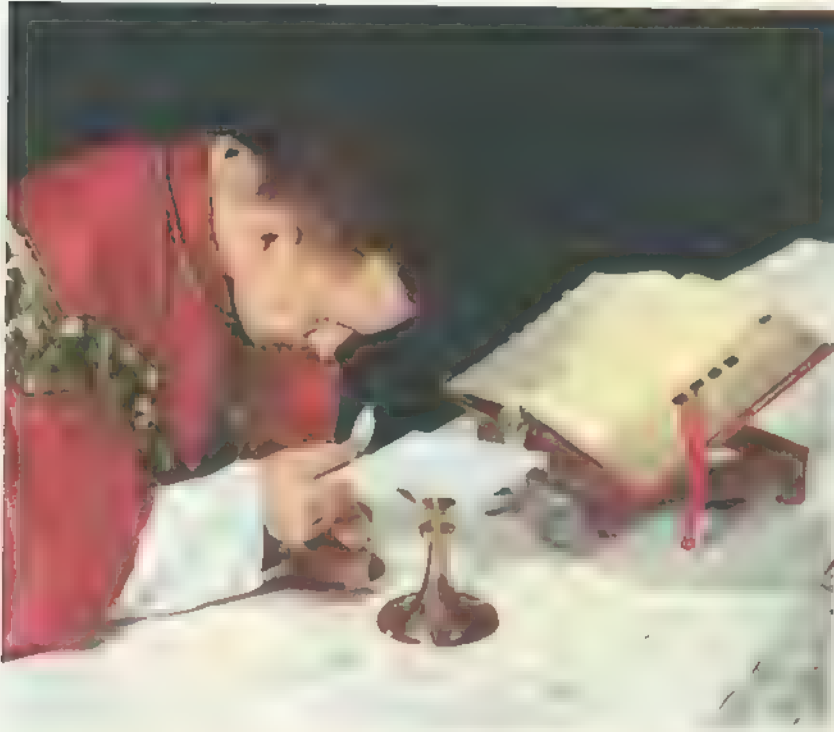
Then we pray three times: "Lord, I am  
not worthy to receive You under my roof;  
only speak the word and my soul shall be  
healed."

As a reminder that we should say this  
prayer, the altar boy rings a little bell three  
times.

Those are the words of the Roman soldier  
who begged Jesus to heal his servant. Such  
faith and humility pleased our Lord, and he  
cured the servant at once. So it will be with  
us if we have enough faith.

We need Jesus to make us holy. During  
the next few minutes of holy Mass we beg  
our Lord to help us to love Him. True love  
makes us ready to be united to our Lord in  
His Sacrament of love.

## The priest receives Holy Communion



Now the priest says: "May the body of our Lord Jesus Christ keep my soul for eternal life." Then he makes the sign of the cross over himself with the host. Bowing low, the priest then receives the host.

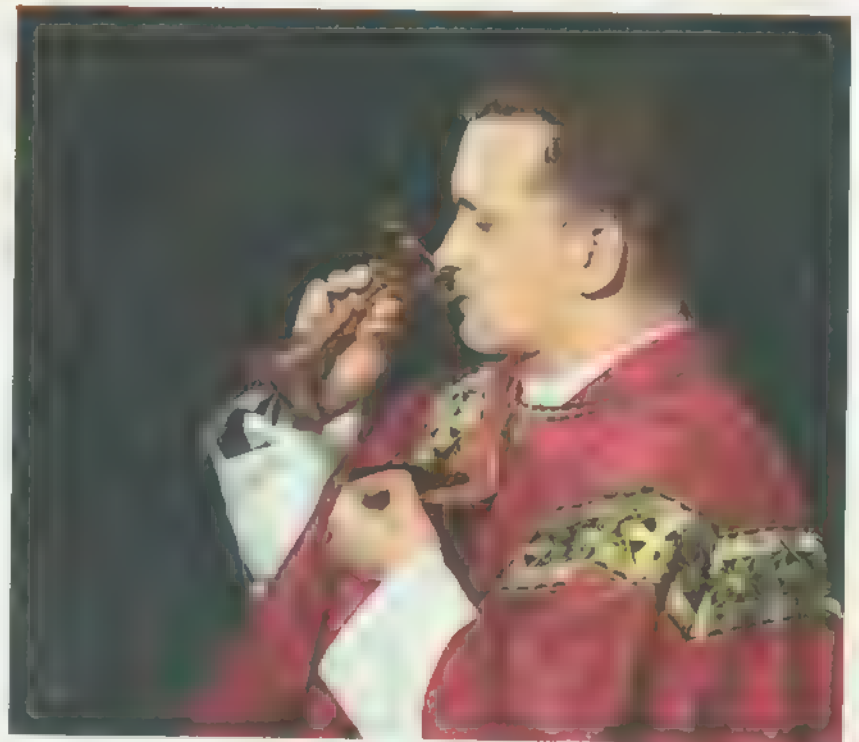
In the early days of the Church the people used to drink from the chalice too. But when certain false teachers said this was absolutely necessary, the Church commanded that the people receive under the form of bread alone. The Church did this to show that Christ was really and truly present under both forms.



After he received the host the priest prays: "What return shall I make to the Lord for all that He has given me? I will take the chalice of salvation, and I will call upon the name of the Lord. Praising I will call upon the Lord, and I shall be saved from my enemies.

"May the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ keep my soul unto life everlasting. Amen."

Then the priest receives the blood of Christ to complete the sacrifice.





## The Mass prepares us for Holy Communion



JESUS INVITES US TO THE HOLY BANQUET

Mass is the best preparation for Communion; that is why we pray along with the priest. This is our Lord's way of bringing us closer to His heavenly Father. As friends of God, we can be guests at His table.

Now that we are friends, Jesus invites us to the banquet which He has prepared.

The priest takes the ciborium which con-

tains the consecrated hosts. Facing the people he says:

"Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who takes away the sins of the world."

Then we repeat with him three times:

"Lord, I am not worthy to receive You under my roof; only speak the word and my soul shall be healed."



We prepare our hearts  
to receive Jesus



WE RECEIVE JESUS IN HOLY COMMUNION

To each communicant the priest says,  
“May the body of our Lord Jesus Christ  
preserve your soul for life eternal. Amen.”

We can help the priest as he gives us the  
host if we raise our head and hold it very  
still; we should also open the mouth fairly

wide and extend the tongue slightly. Close  
the mouth slowly after the host has been  
received and try to swallow it as soon as  
possible.

Spend some time after Communion in  
adoring and thanking our Lord. Remember  
He is sacramentally present within you as  
long as the appearance of bread remains.



The holy banquet  
is now completed



THE PRIEST RINSES THE CHALICE

After the Communion banquet is over, the priest puts everything in order. The server pours wine and water into the chalice and over the fingers of the priest.

While doing these things he prays: "What we have taken like bodily food, may we treasure in a pure heart; and may what is given us in time be our provision for eter-

nity. May Your body, which I have eaten, O Lord, and Your blood, which I have drunk, abide in the very depths of my soul; do not let stains of sin remain in me, whom this pure and holy Sacrament has refreshed."

The priest now says the COMMUNION verse and the POSTCOMMUNION prayer of the day. We may read them in our missal.

The Church teaches that the people receive both the body and blood of our Lord in the host. Jesus made this very clear when He said: "I am the *living bread* which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever, and the bread which I will give is My flesh for the life of the world."

Go now,  
and live the Mass



And now the priest turns to us and says: *Ite Missa est*. This is just about the same as: Go now, and live the Mass.

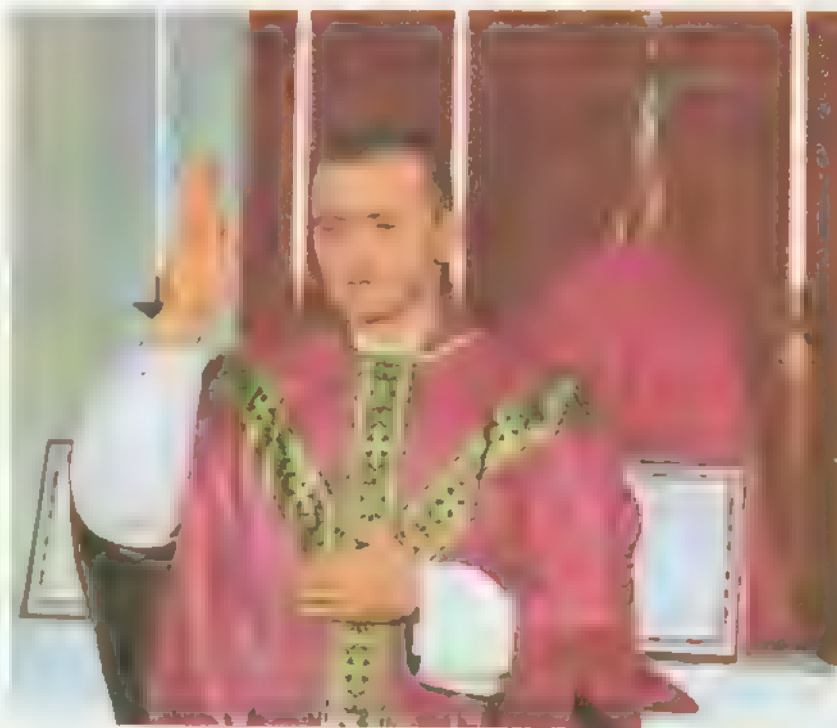
We reply: *Deo gratias*. This means that we thank God for giving us the opportunity to work for Him.



Before Jesus ascended into heaven He told the apostles: "Go into the whole world and preach the gospel." This was their mission: For us it is: Go back to your homes, to your schools, to your offices and factories and continue the life you began with Christ during the Mass.

Let the presence of God be felt by everyone around you. Radiate the spirit of Christ in everything you do and say.

Before going back to His Father, Jesus lifted up His hands and blessed the apostles.







## The priest reads the Last Gospel



THE LAST GOSPEL

The priest now calls upon God to bless all the people who have taken part in the Mass. He says: "May almighty God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you." We answer, "Amen."

The first fourteen verses of the Gospel of St. John are read as the Last Gospel of the Mass. We are reminded in these words that

many people did not love Jesus after He came down from heaven to save them. We promise God it will not be so with us.

At the end we genuflect with the priest when he says: "And the Word was made flesh." These words mean that Jesus became a little child out of love of us. We stand up at the Last Gospel as a sign that we will always love our Lord and stand up for Him.

We close by saying: "Thanks be to God."



There will always be  
another Mass



After praying at the foot of the altar, the priest goes  
to the sacristy for his thanksgiving. On Sunday morning  
in a large parish another Mass will follow in a few minutes.

This means that we have to make room for other families  
who come to offer themselves to God through Jesus.

We leave slowly, wishing we could stay longer to thank Jesus.  
But we continue thanking our Lord as we go back to our homes.

We come to Mass at least every Sunday and holyday.

We do this to let every one know that we are members  
of God's holy Church. Only the Church can give God perfect praise.  
As His loving children we want to praise Him in the most perfect way.

At Mass we join Jesus in giving perfect praise and thanks to God.

Pray for vocations so there will always be enough priests  
to offer Holy Mass.



